

snapshot and although a link between the empirical material and the theoretical framework is made, this would have been more convincing with a wider statistical base. On balance the theoretical sections appear more 'meaty' and this gives the volume a certain 'top-heavy' character. Nevertheless, the overall approach seems to go in the right direction. A theoretical framework is emerging to which further studies can be related.

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**Them—Voices from the Immigrant Community in Contemporary Britain.**

By Jonathon Green. London: Secker & Warburg, 1990. 421 pp. £16.99. ISBN 0-436-200005-8.

The current terminology 'movement of people' embraces both refugees and immigrants coming from their normal place of abode to Europe. The phenomenon is old and the terminology lacks precision. For example, refugees who fled Europe in the pre-1914 period seeking haven in North America were labelled immigrants upon arrival. Sixty years later Vietnamese who left their country as refugees arrived as refugees no matter where they went. Today in Europe refugees and immigrants are lumped together, both groups suspect as to why they have come. But it has not always been like that. One need not go beyond World War II to know that millions of persons were welcomed and resettled in Europe. There is a need to learn from those who have been through the process. Baker wrote in 1983 about the remarkable 'dearth of literature either written by refugees themselves or by refugee workers . . . (who) could provide us with important insights into how they experience being received and settled in this country.' Failing this, 'the wheel must be invented with each arrival'. Not much has changed since.

Thus, the idea behind this book is a good one. It attempts to paint a 'portrait of Britain and the British people from the viewpoint of a diverse group . . . who have settled here as immigrants.' This is familiar terrain for the author who had written an oral history *Days in the Life: Voices from the English Underground*, plus a number of dictionaries—one on jargon, another on contemporary quotations, as well as *The Slang Thesaurus*, *The Cynic's Lexicon* and the like. His tapes generated half a million words, the book contains 200,000—an enormous undertaking. 103 people were interviewed mostly in 1989, all first generation immigrants. Eighty-six interviewees are listed with brief biographical information. Their comments are grouped thematically under 29 chapter headings such as: 'The Decision to Leave', 'The Shock of the New', 'The Immigrant Life', 'Xenophobia: The White Man's Burden' and 25 others.

While the book is interesting, the objective, 'a portrait of Britain and British people' fails to materialize; indeed, the whole effort falls short of expectations. The author handles volumes of material well, even if at times it reads like a dictionary. With the same interviewees appearing under numerous headings there is bound to be repetition. Though distracting, it is not a serious impediment. Only two identifiable Black Africans are listed as interviewees. This is an important omission given the attraction that England holds for indigenous Africans. The respondents are largely from the Asian and West Indian communities with some 'White Africans' from Rhodesia and South Africa.

But there is no context, nor clear central theme emerging from all of the interviews. The stage could have been set at the very beginning, in place of the slightly incoherent ten page introduction surveying England from the Norman Conquest to the arrival of

the Vietnamese boat people. The author's impressionistic observations on England's role in receiving people does a disservice to both the immigrant community and their hosts.

There remains a need to hear from the refugee-immigrant community, wherever they are. It is an extremely fertile field to plough. Perhaps the answer lies in having fewer people share the emotional events involved with someone familiar with the refugee-immigrant regime in the country concerned. In this way, like biography or oral history in general, the individual's story will be placed in a clearly understandable context.

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**The World Refugee Problem.** By Harto Hakovirta. Tampere, Finland: Hillside Publications, 1991. 109 pp. £14.95/FM125. ISBN 951-95484-1-6.

The author holds a dual appointment in International Politics at the University of Tampere north of Helsinki and at the University of Lapland, at Rovaniemi, on the Arctic Circle. The latter may account for the brevity, clarity of thought and originality in this slim volume. Indeed, I understand that the final revision of the original Finnish text was carried out in minus 40 degree weather—Springtime in Lapland. One of his earlier books, *Third World Conflict and Refugeeism*, is a pioneering analysis, graphically detailing the linkage between refugee and guerrilla movements, prompting the observation, in this book, on the 'clear tendency for most refugee organizations to transform sooner or later into warring factions'. While everyone may know this, he offers the intellectual-scientific evidence for the statement. More recently Hakovirta has turned his thoughts towards 'Reforming the Global Refugee Regime—Application and Test of a Regime Theory', a preliminary study on a vitally important subject scarcely treated in the literature.

Thus, because of earlier research and writing, the author is able to provide in *The World Refugee Problem* a concise, accurate and extremely readable summary of the current worry about refugees. One suspects that he may have had the Finnish population in mind, writing so that the complex issues are easily understood by the Finnish reading public. While the influx of refugees into that country can hardly be compared to mainland Europe, there is growing concern among the body politic that an 'invasion' is taking place.

But the book is timely in yet another sense. Finland shares a 1,300 kilometre border with the former Soviet Union although it sends two-thirds of its exports to Western Europe. The on-going domestic discussion about full membership in the European Community, a clear break in the nation's traditional neutrality, raises dual fears about foreigners from the East and from the South. First, there is the threat of massive numbers of starving Russians crossing the border—after all, Helsinki and St. Petersburg are on the same latitude separated by a boatride across the Gulf of Finland. Second, EC membership would mean the unrestricted movement of people within the Community—an invasion from the South and its 'standard of living refugees'. These are real fears! The author in the best tradition of 'town and gown' explains to his countrymen that 'refugeeism'—as he is fond of calling it, is a worldwide drama in which Finland is a bit actor. He has done this extremely well. The bonus is that he has a first class translator in David Kivinen, permitting a wider audience to benefit. This is a book that an enterprising publisher could bring out in a low cost paperback edition for popular distribution. There is a vital need for the reading public, but particularly secondary school students, to learn about refugee issues.

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